

Commissioners make strides against breast cancer

As thousands of people descended on downtown Miami October 6, 2007 to show their support for the “Making Strides Against Breast Cancer” walkathon, Commissioners Sally A. Heyman, Audrey M. Edmonson, Dorrin D. Rolle, Katy Sorenson and Jose “Pepe” Diaz were right there with them to present a proclamation to the event organizers declaring it “Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Day.”

Together, the full Board of County Commissioners donated \$76,000 to the cause. Commissioner Heyman is a cancer survivor and longtime supporter of the American Cancer Society. Mary Ferreiro, her office manager and team captain of the event for the County Commission’s group raised approximately \$5,000 with the assistance of coworkers who walked or made monetary donations. Other Miami-Dade County departments also participated.

“This event is close to many people’s heart because of the millions of lives who have been touched by this terrible disease,” said Commissioner Heyman. “I came to this event to join the thousands of others who are bringing back hope to cancer victims and their loved ones. The money raised here will greatly benefit ongoing cancer research, education, and early detection initiatives; and ensure that all women have access to mammograms and follow-up care, regardless of their income.”

According to the American Cancer Society, breast cancer is the most

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Reconstruction of the 17th Avenue Bridge moves ahead of schedule



Workers pour a concrete slab. Originally built in in 1928, the NW 17th Avenue Bridge over the Miami River is currently being upgraded to stretch its lifespan.

Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro and officials from Miami-Dade’s Public Works department held a town hall meeting in October to hear from the general public and business owners regarding the reconstruction of the NW 17th Avenue Bridge.

Built in 1928 by old-fashioned teams of riveters, the bridge on NW 17th Avenue is unique because it originally had a wooden deck and was designed to carry an electric trolley car line. The structure is approximately 608 feet long. The overhead clearance for marine traffic is approximately 19 feet. In 2005, the average traffic over the bridge was 21,073 vehicles per day.

Each year, inspections are conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation and Miami-Dade Public Works Department to evaluate the service life of the existing bridge structure. Most recently, it was revealed that the bridge had suffered the adverse effects of age, weather and the increased traffic volume, and reconstruction was deemed necessary.

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Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

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Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro addresses town hall participants.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

In August the bridge closed to undergo major renovations including: repairing/restoring concrete members of the bridge structure, repairing deteriorated steel, reinforcing steel corrosion, replacing the steel roadway floor and the center locks of the bridge, removing existing paint, repainting, and various miscellaneous repairs.

During the town hall meeting held in October at the Mahi Shrine, residents affected by the bridge closure expressed their concerns with the timetable for the completion of the reconstruction. Chairman Barreiro acknowledged the inconvenience and explained "that even though the official completion of the reconstruction is set for June 2008, everything is being



Members of the public participate in the town hall meeting.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

done to speed up the process to six months instead of nine. We are also saving a lot of money by fixing the bridge instead of replacing it; we are paying \$9 million dollars, when the replacement cost would have been \$80 million," the Chairman added.

Gaspar Miranda,
Miami-Dade's

assistant director of Public Works stressed that the safety of the general public is a fundamental responsibility of the Public Works Department. "The lifespan of a bridge like this one is of about 75 years, with the reconstruction, we are stretching its life an additional 40 years," he said.

As the reconstruction of the 17th Avenue bridge continues, Miami-Dade will be placing updated signage in the surrounding area indicating alternate detour routes.

For up to date information on construction and traffic, you may call 3-1-1.

Commissioner Rebeca Sosa, District 6

First South Florida renewable fuel station opens for business



Commissioner Rebeca Sosa

Commissioner Rebeca Sosa joined Willie and Ignacio Urbieto of Urbieto Oil Inc., Karl Doenges of CleanFuel USA and Mary Beth Stanek of General Motors on September 13, at Urbieto's Miami U-Gas station, 10 NW 79th Avenue. During the event, Commissioner Sosa presented the Urbieto family with a proclamation declaring Thursday, September 13, 2007, as Urbieto Oil Inc. Day.

The Miami U-Gas is the first South Florida service station to offer E85 ethanol to the public. "This station marks an important beginning for our residents," said Commissioner Sosa. "Having a local station where we can purchase renewable fuel for our vehicles, is not only good for our environment but also good for our pockets as it helps us reduce our dependency from foreign energy sources."

E85 is a mixture of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline, a mostly renewable fuel that can be made from corn, that can be used in cars and trucks. E85 is widely used in Europe and South America and is becoming increasingly common in the United States; more than 20 fueling stations across the Midwest are selling E85 25 to 40 percent cheaper than gasoline.



Commissioner Rebeca Sosa celebrates the opening of the first E85 Station in Miami-Dade.

Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, District 9

Commissioner's initiatives yields Government Access Station Web-site national award

Commissioner Dennis C. Moss is particularly proud of the County's most recent national recognition – first prize in the Government Access Station Web-site category at the National Association of



Commissioner Dennis C. Moss views a video clip on Miami-Dade County's website Miami-Dade TV On-Demand, which was developed from his web-casting legislation in 1999. The site won first place in the Government Access Station Web-site category at the National Association of Telecommunications and Advisors' (NATO) 22nd Annual Government Programming Awards.

Telecommunications Officers and Advisors' (NATO) 22nd Annual Government Programming Awards.

It was Commissioner Moss' initiative back in 1999 that addressed the community's legitimate need for access to county government meetings and other government information via the Miami-Dade County web-site. That idea formed the foundation for a valuable public information network that would make matters concerning Miami-Dade County readily available to citizens – no matter where they are.

"The internet is available in most homes, offices and cafés around the world and has become an integral part of the lives of most people," said Commissioner Moss. "At the time I introduced legislation for the implementation of web-casting, I felt it was important for the County to be available to residents where ever they are."

Since Commissioner Moss' web-cast initiative in 1999, Miami-Dade County has gone on to build on the idea and recently unveiled Miami-Dade TV On-Demand, which won the NATO award. On-Demand allows web-users to select and watch video of Commission meetings and original programming from Miami-Dade TV. To view Miami-Dade's TV On-Demand programming, visit: <http://www.miamidade.gov/ondemand/>

"I am proud that I work with a County that is progressive and that could see the vision of my initiative, beamed Moss. "Congratulations to county staffers for carrying the vision forward and making technology easier to use and County information more accessible for the good people of Miami-Dade."

NATO recognizes excellence in broadcast, cable, multimedia, and electronic programming produced by local government agencies.

Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson, District 3

Commissioner celebrates Rainbow Pride Resource Fair with area residents

Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson teamed up with Robert E. Loupo of Safe Schools South Florida and Juan del Hierro, Sacred Ministry Director of Unity on the Bay during the Rainbow Pride Resource Fair on Saturday, October 6, 2007. Commissioner Edmonson joined families from her District 3's Upper East Side, for the event at American Legion Post.

The fair featured music, food, rides for children, entertainment, and informational booths. Pridelines Youth Services, SAVE Dade, Safe Schools South Florida, Unity on the Bay, and the State Attorney's Office were among the participating organizations. Commissioner



Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson joins Robert E. Loupo (left) of Safe Schools South Florida and Juan del Hierro during the Rainbow Pride Resource Fair held at Upper East Side of District 3.

Edmonson served as one of the Fair's sponsors and was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for her support.

Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle, District 2

Seventh annual 'Rolle Bowl' attracts large crowds



Young football players take to the field competing against each other for the top prize during the seventh annual Rolle Bowl.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

The seventh annual Rolle Bowl was a huge success this year with more than 3,000 people from Liberty City and surrounding community attending the event at the NFL/YET Center on September 22, 2007. Sponsored by Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle, the event pitted two Liberty City foes - Luther Campbell's Liberty City Optimist (Warriors) against Commissioner Rolle's Gwen Cherry Boys and Girls Club (Bulls).

"The kids had a great time - their parents and siblings, too. This event is about celebrating youth and having both boys and girls take part in the wholesome activities that the Optimist Club provides," said Commissioner Rolle. "Optimist Clubs are more than just football, they are structured programs that keep our children busy from 3 - 9 p.m. They provide recreational and educational opportunities and pull troubled kids away from crime."

After each game, Commissioner Rolle presented trophies to each team for the most valuable player on offense and defense.

Coach Billy Rolle and members of the Miami Northwestern Bulls, the number one high school football team in the nation, made a surprise appearance as a special treat to the players. Coach Rolle addressed some of the teams about the importance of getting an education and working hard to get good grades - a requirement for participating in high school sports. The NFL/YET Center strives to help students do just that by offering a tutorial program to help youngsters improve their grades.

During a special presentation in the commission chambers at County Hall on October 18, Commissioner Rolle presented the winning club with a \$5,000 check and the runner-up team with a \$1,000 check.



Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle addresses a crowd of excited football players during his seventh annual Rolle Bowl held at the NFL/YET Center.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

Commissioner Javier D. Souto, District 10

United States Court of Appeals upholds County landmark Legislation regulating adult book stores



Commissioner Javier D. Souto

The United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit affirmed the federal district court's order granting, in its entirety, Miami-Dade County Attorney's motion for summary judgment in cases filed by adult book stores against an Ordinance sponsored by Commissioner Javier D. Souto in 1996.

Three adult bookstores challenged, on federal and state grounds, a provision in Miami-Dade County Ordinance 96-13 which requires that all video booths in adult bookstores have a permanently open entranceway or doorway. The Courts upheld the County's arguments that the law did not violate constitutionally protected free speech and right to privacy because the ordinance does not ban adult bookstores (or sexually explicit movies) altogether. It merely regulates the place and manner in which adult bookstores may show movies on their premises.

According to Commissioner Souto, "this is another resounding victory for the families and residents of our community," said Commissioner Souto. "More importantly, this is landmark legislation, which other communities and municipalities can follow, because it has been upheld constitutionally by the United States Court of Appeals, which is just one step below the Supreme Court of the United States of America." "We carefully drafted this law to preserve the patrons constitutionally protected right to watch sexually-explicit movies in these booths or cubicles, while eliminating the viewer's privacy," added Commissioner Souto "Patrons of these establishment will be less willing to engage in sexual activity with others in the booths, if there are no doors."

Furthermore, the managers or operators of these adult book stores would be consenting to this illegal sexual activity if it is occurring out in the open within their line of sight," said Souto.

In 1995, during public hearings in front of the Board of County Commissioners, Morton Laitner, district legal counsel for Human Resource Services, testified before the subcommittee that during HRS and Miami-Dade County Health Department inspections of adult bookstores, investigators found "sanitary nuisances, high-risk sexual activity and that sexually transmitted diseases were being spread in these establishments." He further explained that to address these problems, the agencies obtained injunctions that closed up holes in walls, removed doors from video booths, and closed down some stores.

Aside from the open booth provision, the ordinance also prohibits owners of adult bookstores from allowing sexual activity on the premises; permits no more than one chair in a video booth; prohibits an owner from providing or allowing holes in interior walls which are used to have sex; sets minimum lighting levels; and requires that the owner's, operator's, and shift manager's name and address be posted.

Commissioner Souto states that an important provision of the law is that any adult bookstore or adult video store where, within any six-month that incurs three or more violations in a six-month period, can be declared a public nuisance.

"On behalf of the residents of Miami-Dade County I want to recognize the efforts by County Attorney John McInnis who worked with my staff to draft this ordinance; County Attorney Bernardo Pastor, who defended the law in the courts; Morton Laitner Chief Legal Counsel for Miami-Dade County Health Department; Dr. Jean Maleki, director, Palm Beach Health Department, and our expert witness; Jack Dicarlo, Miami-Dade Police Department, Nuisance Abatement Unit, and Wally Livingstone former Miami-Dade County Health Department Official," said Souto.

Breast cancer...continued from p.1



L-R, Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle, District 2; Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, District 12, Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson, District 3; Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, District 4; and Commissioner Katy Sorenson, District 8. The full Board of County Commissioners donated \$76,000 to the cause and presented a proclamation to the event organizers declaring it "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Day."

common among women in the United States, after skin cancer. It is the second leading cause of cancer death in women around the world, after lung cancer. This year alone, approximately 178,480 women in the United States are expected to be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer. Some 40,460 women are expected to die from the disease.

However, positive results have been made from efforts to improve detection and treatment, and breast cancer death rates are actually decreasing. Today, there are close to 2.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States. The American Cancer Society is credited with having established mammography as the gold standard for the early detection of breast cancer.

"Every person here today is contributing to the fight against cancer. Our strength is in numbers," said Commissioner Edmonson. "The more we raise awareness about this grave issue, the better able we are to save lives and improve the quality of life for cancer patients."

Commissioner Sally Heyman, District 4

Officials introduce new e-Notify system for Court and Cops

Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle, police chiefs and court administrators announced the implementation of e-Notify - a new electronic notification system for Miami-Dade County's justice system during a press conference on October 10, 2007.

"This has been a joint effort over the past few years. Miami-Dade sponsored the implementation of the e-Notify system to benefit all law enforcement agencies and ultimately the citizens," said Commissioner Heyman. "The results are, police departments getting prompt notifications, police officers remaining on the streets and taxpayers saving a lot of money."

Since Miami-Dade was created in 1957, the County has been distributing subpoena notifications manually, a very costly and labor intensive process.

In an average month, a staggering 40,000 subpoenas are printed, manually sorted and courier delivered covering 2,000 miles across the county to police departments in every jurisdiction.

"E-notify, the new process announced October 10, enables the courts to increase police agency attendance, improve efficiencies and accountability across multiple departments, agencies and jurisdictions," added Commissioner Heyman. "No more manual process and courier



Miami-Dade Commissioner (District 4) Sally A. Heyman announces the implementation of e-Notify during a press conference. State attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle (right), Hamilton Davis, Information Systems Director, State Attorney's Office and Aventura Police Chief Steve Steinberg (left) listen in the background as announcement was made.

delivery for the 40,000+ subpoenas each month." During the first day of e-Notify implementation 1800 notifications were transmitted.

"This program will be a huge assistance to our cases," said State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle. "E-notify will help us coordinate our schedules and help us be more efficient in processing our cases."

The anticipated savings to Miami-Dade County is more than \$1 million dollars annually and there will be significant savings to all cities based on their subpoena volume. Additionally, e-Notify will save thousands of man-power hours and allow departments to redirect resources to increase public safety. The system automatically notifies law enforcement witnesses about subpoenas and other court proceedings. This new process will increase efficiency in court services, monitor law enforcement court-related overtime expenses, and enhance communication among court and law enforcement agencies.

Commissioner Natacha Seijas, District 13

Seniors invited to view etchings of Spanish master José de Goya



Commissioner Natacha Seijas

As she does very often throughout the year, Commissioner Natacha Seijas invited a group of senior citizens from her district to take in some of the area's art and culture. This time she took them to enjoy a showing of the complete collection of etchings by Francisco José de Goya, the legendary artist who has often been called "the first of the moderns." Goya was a court painter and a chronicler of history. His uncompromising portrayal of his times marked the beginning of 19th-century realism.

The exhibit of nearly 220 etchings, "Goya: The Engravings of the Caixanova Collection" is presented for the first time in the United States by Miami Dade College and its president Eduardo Padrón at the historic Freedom Tower.

After viewing the exhibit, Commissioner Seijas' guests were also

able to reminiscence and enjoy the Freedom Tower's architecture. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 and was the reception center for Cuban refugees from 1962 until 1974.

To culminate their visit, Commissioner Seijas treated the seniors to a delicious lunch at the Stephen P. Clark Government Center terrace. During lunch, they spent some time chatting and sharing their concerns with the Commissioner. It was truly a fun time for all!



Commissioner Natacha Seijas (standing) listens to her constituents concerns.

Vice Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan, District 1

Beautification and rehabilitation dollars available to more Opa-Locka residents



Vice Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan

Miami-Dade County commissioners approved two resolutions on July 10, 2007, that will significantly expand the boundaries of two home improvement programs in Opa-locka to include most of the city. The resolutions were introduced by Vice-Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan whose district includes the city of Opa-locka.

Originally the boundaries of the Opa-locka Triangle Home Rehabilitation Program and the Opa-locka Triangle Beautification Program included only homes in the

embattled area known as The Triangle. Commissioner Jordan's resolutions and the resulting expansions will bring into the programs, all homes in the region bordered by N.W. 151st. Street in the north, N.W. 135th Street in the south, N.W. 17th Avenue in the east and N.W. 37th Avenue in the west.

"It is clear that the problems that plague The Triangle area are not contained in that small community, but spill out into the rest of the city of Opa-locka," said Vice Chairwoman Jordan. "It made sense to me to expand the programs to include other areas that are equally blighted and troubled."

The home beautification program provides grants of up to \$3,900 to homeowners to pay for painting, landscaping and other aesthetic improvements. The home rehabilitation program provides loans of up to \$30,000 to homeowners for owner-occupied single family homes. The programs are funded from surtax funds and the State Housing Initiative Program (SHIP) and administered by the Opa-locka Community Development Corporation.



Opa-locka resident Emil Jackson shows off the dramatic improvements to her property to Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan. Looking on are Opa-locka Mayor Joseph L. Kelly, (far left), and Roger Hernstadt, former director of Miami-Dade's Office of Capital Improvement.

Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez, District 7

Commissioner addresses issue of arsenic contamination in water wells



Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez

After many months and several meetings with residents concerned about the high concentration of arsenic in their well water, Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez recommended a solution to the problem. At the Governmental Operations and Environment Committee of November 13, 2007, Commissioner Gimenez presented a resolution that calls for investment of \$3 million to install water pipelines and fire hydrants in the affected communities to connect them to the County's water system.

This will provide an alternate water source for area homes, some of which now get their water from contaminated wells.

Arsenic is a naturally occurring phenomenon that, if consumed in high concentration, can negatively affect one's health. The new infrastructure will be built in the area bounded by S.W. 72nd Street to the north; S.W. 80th Street to the south; S.W. 84th Court to the west;

and S.W. 77th Court to the east. Citing concern for the public's health, safety and welfare, Commissioner Gimenez requested that the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department assume the task of designing and installing the pipelines and fire hydrants because of their ability to get the job done fast, rather than wait for competitive bids to come in from private companies.

"Time is of the essence in this project. I want my District 7 residents to feel safe and certain that the water they're drinking is potable and that they have access to fire hydrants should the need for them arise," said Commissioner Gimenez. "I am confident that the employees of the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department have the expertise necessary to complete the job."

The project will be funded by Building Better Communities General Obligation Bonds and Water and Sewer Fire Hydrant Capital Funds. Once the installations are completed, residents in the affected areas will become customers of MDWASD and will be billed quarterly retail water service charges and fire hydrant fees.



Water pipelines and fire hydrants in the affected communities will allow residents to connect to the County's water system.

Vice Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan, District 1

District 1 celebrates its first Hispanic Heritage Festival

Despite the threat of rains, District 1 residents of every hue and ethnicity turned out for Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan's first Hispanic Heritage Festival. The free admission event held at Acadia Park featured music, dance, games and fun for the whole family.

"I was thrilled to see the great turn out from residents," said Commissioner Jordan. "I look forward to making this an annual affair."

The crowd at the festival rocked to live performances by Bobby Ramírez, Pan con Bistec and Sazón Fusion Latina, learned about the roots of Puerto Rican music in African drumming and showed off their salsa moves. Some residents, including Commissioner Jordan, vied for trophies in a spirited domino tournament, while children enjoyed the bounce house, snow cones and face painting.

In addition to all the fun and entertainment, several social agencies and Miami-Dade County departments distributed valuable information about their services, provided basic health services and took children's fingerprints for the safety IDs.



Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan learns some salsa steps from members of Tanboriquen during the Hispanic Heritage Festival, which she hosted for residents of District 1 on October 13, 2007, at Acadia Park.
(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

Commissioner Joe A. Martinez, District 11

Commissioner's bedtime stories draws huge crowds

The scene of Commissioner Joe A. Martinez's bedtime stories event held October 3, 2007 was akin to that of a rock concert or the front gates of Walt Disney World. More than 500 eager children, dressed



Commissioner Joe A. Martinez reads a story book to children, who packed the West Kendall Regional Library in the Hammocks to attend the commissioner's bedtime stories event on October 3, 2007. More than 500 children participated in the event held in observance of International Literacy Day.
(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

in pajamas and holding teddy bears, piled into the West Kendall Regional Library in the Hammocks to hear Commissioner Martinez read storybooks in recognition of International Literacy Day.

"This has been our most successful bedtime story event," said Commissioner Martinez. "I was happy to see so many children and parents come."

Parents play such a vital role in encouraging their children in the pursuit of education and inspiring their love for reading."

Because of the overwhelming response to the event, two separate reading areas were set up to accommodate the large crowd with Commissioner Martinez reading to both groups. The reading area was decorated to mimic evening time in a child's bedroom. In addition, the children were treated to free storybooks and backpacks as well as an evening snack.

"The bedtime stories event is about encouraging children to develop their reading and writing skills while showing them that it can be fun," said Commissioner Martinez. "International Literacy Day is a reminder of the importance of literacy for all individuals. Reading and writing form the fundamental education of our children and is usually an indicator of their success later in life."

Commissioner Katy Sorenson, District 8

Carbon Monoxide Awareness Day



Commissioner Katy Sorenson

Commissioner Katy Sorenson teamed up with local public and private organizations to host a Carbon Monoxide Awareness Day event at Southland Mall in Cutler Bay on September 14, 2007.

“We hope this event will lead more people to realize that this is a very real and dangerous threat and that they take the simple steps necessary to protect themselves and their families,” said Commissioner Sorenson. “By helping those most at risk, this program offered by our firefighters will undoubtedly save lives,” offers Commissioner Sorenson.

During the event, participants signed-up to have a carbon monoxide detector installed in their homes for free if they meet certain eligibility requirements. Supplies of detectors are limited, but all attendees at the event can put their name on a waiting list to be contacted when additional detectors become available. Partners sponsoring the event included: Miami-Dade Fire Rescue; Team Metro South; Janelle’s Wishing Well Foundation, a charitable organization that raises carbon monoxide poisoning awareness among youth; and Kidde, the world’s largest manufacturer of fire safety products.

Every year in the United States, 500 people die and another 16,000 are hospitalized from carbon monoxide poisoning. Upgrading your home with a carbon monoxide detector is a safe and easy way to keep from



L.R. Gisela Granado, VP Operations of Janelle’s Wishing Well, Commissioner Katy Sorenson, Janine Bertot, VP Fundraising & Sponsorship of Janelle’s Wishing Well, and chief Al D. Darring, CFO Fire Prevention Division

becoming a victim of this silent killer.

The elderly are especially at risk of the harms of carbon monoxide poisoning because their health tends to be more precarious, which makes it harder for them to recover from the associated headaches, dizziness and flu-like symptoms.

For additional information please call 786-331-4933.

Commissioner José “Pepe” Diaz, District 12

Students receive back-to-school help



(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

Ashley Ruiz, 7, of John G. Dupuis Elementary gets a little help from Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz and Billy the Marlin as she puts on her brand new backpack on Saturday, August 25, 2007. Ashley was one of 250 students who received free school supplies from Commissioner Diaz at his District office in Doral. The students also received immunization shots provided by the Miami-Dade Health Department and enrollment information for the Florida KidCare health insurance program from state representatives who were on hand. Pre-selected for the giveaway by their school principals and teachers, the students came from Marjory Stoneman Douglas Elementary, John I. Smith Elementary, Sweetwater Elementary, Ernest R. Graham Elementary, Hialeah Gardens Elementary, Markas A. Milam K-8 Center, John G. Dupuis Elementary, Ben Sheppard Elementary, Eugenia B. Thomas Elementary, Doral Middle School, Mater Academy K-12, Youth Co-op Charter School K-8, Paul Bell Middle School, Jose Marti Middle School and Palm Springs Middle School.

Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro, District 5

Miami-Dade veterans honored for serving our country



Miami-Dade veterans received a plaque honoring their service for our country

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

Miami-Dade Board of County Commission Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro, joined by Mayor Carlos Alvarez and members of the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners presented a Veterans Plaque to nearly 200 Miami-Dade employees representing the 1,500 Miami-Dade Employees that are on active duty or are veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The ceremonial presentation, a salute to our veterans whose honor, courage and resolve have shown the power of liberty and earned Commissioners respect and admiration, took place on November 8, during the Service Awards ceremony at the Board of County Commission Chambers in commemoration of Veteran's Day.



L-R – Miami-Dade Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro and Mayor Carlos Alvarez proudly display Veteran's Day plaque presented to Miami-Dade employees on active duty or that are veterans of the U.S. Armed Services.

(Miami-Dade/Rick Garcia)

"It's important to recognize our own employees and thank them for the service and sacrifices they make when they separate from their families to serve in the United States armed services," said Chairman Barreiro. "When we celebrate Veterans day, let's not forget those that have offered the ultimate sacrifice so that we can have a better country."

The plaque, which will be displayed in the Stephen P. Clark Government Center, was ceremonially presented to everyone in attendance to commemorate their service.

Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, District 9

Wounded police officer Jody Wright is honored

In October several hundred local citizens, Miami-Dade police officers, local elected officials, and media personalities gathered in front of the Cutler Ridge Target store to show their respect, unity and support for Miami-Dade police officer Jody Wright and to participate in a candlelight walk against crime and violence. Wright was one of four Miami-Dade police officers wounded in the September 13, 2007 shooting by gunman Shawn LaBeet.



Commissioner Dennis C. Moss greets Miami-Dade Police Officer Jody Wright during a community candlelight walk for peace in South Miami.

In part to show solidarity with Officer Jody Wright and her coworkers officers Carlin, Tundidor and slain officer Jose Somohano, and also to demonstrate the community's frustration with violent crimes, Commissioners Dennis C. Moss and Katy Sorenson, officers from the Cutler Ridge Police Station, and Crime-Stoppers mascot officer McGruff led the crowd chanting "Now is the

time to stop all crime." The walk began at the intersection of South



Commissioner Moss and two youngsters lead the community march for peace in South Miami.

Dixie Highway and SW 112th Avenue and ended at the Cutler Ridge Police Station on SW 211th Street.

Commissioners Moss and Sorenson both challenged everyone to continue to support the Miami-Dade Police Department as they continue to keep our families, homes and communities safe.

"The officers who were hurt on September 13 and on other occasions are our modern-day heroes as they place their lives on the line daily to keep this community safe," said Commissioner Dennis C. Moss.

Commissioner Rebeca Sosa, District 6

Commissioner first to receive NIGP Public Official of the Year award



Commissioner Rebeca Sosa

Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez, members of the Board of County Commissioners and county staff recently congratulated Commissioner Rebeca Sosa for receiving the first-ever award for Public Official of the Year from the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. (NIGP), Greater Miami Chapter.

The county director of Procurement Management, Miriam Singer, presented Commissioner Sosa with the prestigious accolade on behalf of Thomas Blaine, president of the NIGP, Greater Miami Chapter during a special presentation at County Hall on October 16, 2007. Commissioner Sosa was thanked by her colleagues for her dedication, service and leadership in procurement reform.

When presenting the award, Singer stated "Commissioner Sosa's dedication to improving the procurement processes of Miami-Dade County has resulted in a modernization of procurement related ordinances, administrative orders, and policies."

Commissioner Sosa's interest and dedication has also increased the ethics and professionalism of County procurement staff and has resulted in the County receiving the NIGP Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award and the Pareto Award, the highest



Miami-Dade Commissioner Rebeca Sosa proudly displays the NIGP Award after being selected Public Official of the Year. She is joined by Miami-Dade Mayor; fellow Commissioners and County staff.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

award given for outstanding performance in public procurement and the most prestigious form of peer recognition.

The National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. (NIGP) is a national, membership-based, non-profit organization providing support to professionals in the public sector purchasing profession.

Commissioner Javier D. Souto, District 10

Commissioner hosts fair to inform residents of free transit benefits



Commissioner Javier D. Souto

Commissioner Javier Souto invited Horizons West residents to an exclusive Miami-Dade Transit's Neighborhood Fair in August at the Horizon West Homeowners Association Clubhouse. The fair's goal was to inform senior citizens of the Golden Passport benefits and to let veterans know about the Patriot's Passport. Both passes allow users to ride transit free of charge.

Commissioner Souto sponsored the Patriot Passport in 2004. It allows all honorably discharged veterans who are permanent residents of Miami-Dade and whose annual income is \$22,000 or less to use Miami-Dade Transit services free of charge.

In 1999, Commissioner Souto co-sponsored a resolution presented by



Residents participate in Neighborhood Fair.

Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro, for the creation of the Golden Passport to provide free transportation for Miami-Dade senior citizens. With this pass, seniors can ride transit free of charge if they are 65 years and older or receive Social Security benefits.

To find out the details or to participate in these programs, please call 3-1-1 or visit: <http://www.miamidade.gov/transit/reducedfare.asp>.

Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, District 4

Commissioner raises awareness during Fire Prevention Week

In 2005, the U.S. Fire Administration reported that fire killed more Americans than all natural disasters combined. In Miami-Dade alone, residents called in more than 6,000 fires in 2004. To help reverse those statistics and reduce the number of fire incidents claiming victims, Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, distributed smoke detectors during a Fire Prevention Week event at the Interama Fire Station #22 in October.

Commissioner Heyman gave smoke detectors to elected officials from her municipalities and community activists in the unincorporated areas to distribute to seniors who reside in District 4 and who do not already have this safety feature in their home.



In recognition of Fire Prevention Week, Commissioner Sally A. Heyman helps distribute smoke detectors during a press conference.
(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

"Fires can happen quickly and without warning, and Miami-Dade has seen many lives lost because an alert system was not in place," said Commissioner Heyman. "These smoke detectors will be handed to some of our most vulnerable residents, our seniors, so they can respond to fires with enough time to make it out safely."

Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle, District 2

Monument honors Haitians who fought in Revolutionary War



Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle

Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle was part of a historical ceremony in Savannah, Georgia recently to erect a statue commemorating the contribution of Haitian soldiers who fought in the American Revolution.

Commissioner Rolle contributed significant funding to the creation of the monument. He was joined in Savannah's Franklin Square for the event by U.S. Representatives Kendrick Meek and John Barrow, Savannah Mayor Otis. S. Johnson, Haiti's Consul General Ralph Latortue and several other elected officials from across the country and from Haiti.

The life-size statues of four soldiers depict members of the Chasseurs-Volontaires de Saint-Domingue, a regiment of soldiers who formed a tenth of the allied army during the Revolutionary War's bloody siege of Savannah in 1779. The Haitian free blacks, who numbered more than 500, were the largest military unit of the Savannah battle, and possibly the largest black unit to serve in the American Revolution. They were noted for their distinguished bravery, often risking their lives to provide cover for the American colonists and French soldiers they fought alongside. After fighting unsuccessfully to keep the British out of the city, many returned to Haiti to lead rebellions that won the island's independence in 1804.

The statues stand on a six-foot tall granite pillar and illustrate two Haitian soldiers with rifles raised on either side of a fallen companion, a young Henri Christophe as a drummer boy. Christophe fought in

Savannah as a teenager, and later became Haiti's first president after its liberation from France.

"I am very proud to be part of this historical event," said Commissioner Rolle. "Unfortunately, many Americans are unaware of the significant contribution this unit of Haitian soldiers made to our independence. Hopefully, the statues will lead to more questions and answers so that the story of their bravery will continue to be told and that Haitians' long history with the United States will be acknowledged."

The memorial was made possible by the fund-raising and lobbying efforts of the Miami-based Haitian-American Historical Society. The organization had been championing for the statues since 2001. An additional portion of the monument – two more soldiers - will be erected in February 2008.



Commissioner Rolle contributed significant funding for the erection of this monument commemorating the contribution of Haitian soldiers who fought in the American Revolution.

Commissioner Natacha Seijas, District 13

Certificate of Appreciation presented to future leaders

Commissioner Natacha Seijas presented a Certificate of Appreciation to a group of students from American Senior High School in October for their participation in the Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program. This wonderful program was founded in 1997 by Jennifer Valoppi, a television journalist, and Don Browne, president of Telemundo Network.

The Women of Tomorrow program teams up professional women with small groups of girls attending public high school in a four-year mentoring program.

Professional women are paired with high school women to help them reach their full potential through mentoring, inspiration, and empowerment.

“Programs like these are beneficial to our community as they assist young women realize that nothing is impossible,” said Commissioner Seijas. “By seeing what other women have accomplished, these girls can be inspired to succeed.”

Commissioner Seijas gave the students insight into her role as a county elected official and the challenges she faces in her service to the community.

She also told them about the issues she is passionate about – relating to women, children, and seniors – and the initiatives she has implemented, such as the strolling parking permit.

As a woman and a leader, Commissioner Seijas inspired the young girls and encouraged them to accomplish their full potential.



American Senior High School students join Commissioner Natacha Seijas after receiving a Certificate of Appreciation.
(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

Commissioner Joe A. Martinez, District 11

Commissioner presents legislation to keep parks open and active



Commissioner Joe A. Martinez

With the recently passed property tax reform legislation came a decline in property taxes, and a resulting reduction in the funds local government have to operate services to the public. These cuts in turn, are expected to impact County parks and libraries. To offset the reduction in funds, Commissioner Martinez introduced a resolution directing the county manager to create a program to invite, allow and manage private funding for County parks and libraries.

“Other states, such as Washington, have programs that allow companies and citizens to pay for construction or maintenance of park facilities in exchange for various kinds of recognition,” noted Commissioner Martinez. “I think this is something that could work here in Miami-Dade and help us maintain our parks and library services as we face this budget crunch.”

At Commissioner Martinez’ direction, the County is crafting a program to allow private sponsorship of the County’s 43 libraries and more than 250 parks. The new program could mean a world of difference for the senior citizens and children who use county facilities for homework research, leisure and participate in after-school programs.

“More than 250 million people use our parks and more than 6 million readers walk into our library branches every year,” said Commissioner Martinez. “Those numbers represent many children and their parents, as well as senior citizens, who rely on the parks and libraries for free or low cost programs. We have to do everything we can to continue serving them.”

Miami-Dade Park and Recreation already has programs that seek to involve the community in preserving parks and their programs. The Adopt-A-Park program was established by Commission resolution in 2004 and allows community associations, civic groups and neighborhood businesses to make monetary and in-kind donations to their neighborhood parks. In addition, various programs and events at parks are regularly sponsored by companies, social groups and charitable organizations. Friends of the Miami-Dade Public Library volunteers members’ services at various library branches and raises funds for initiatives not covered in the Library’s budget. The Miami-Dade Library Foundation is the fundraising arm of the Library, primarily for major capital projects and broad-scale educational and cultural community programs.

The new program will complement those programs and help cover large construction and operational expenses across the Miami-Dade Park and Recreation and Library programs. In exchange for financing, donors may be recognized with a plaque at the park or library saying a company or person helped pay for construction, repairs or a program.

The county manager is expected to provide details of the new program to the Board of County Commissioners by early 2008.

Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez, District 7

Grand opening of new job center in Coconut Grove Village West

Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez officiated the grand opening of the Coconut Grove Village West One-Stop Job Center, an innovative new program providing a wide range of free services to job seekers.

As a South Florida Workforce Net Site, the Job Center is unique in the County because it consolidates many of the services necessary for the unemployed to find work. A recent community survey found that about 60 percent of those surveyed in the Coconut Grove Village West



Pictured from left to right are Daniel Fils-Aime, South Florida Workforce Investment Board, Workforce System Improvement Committee Chair; Rick Beasley, Executive Director, South Florida Workforce Investment Board; Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez, District 7; and Manny Alonzo Poch, President, Board of Directors, UEC.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

area were either unemployed or employed only part-time.

Roslyn Sparks with the Coconut Grove Village West Homeowner's Association and Tenants Association (HOATA) brought the idea of a one-stop job center to the attention of Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez. "This is a wonderful example of a neighborhood identifying their needs and bringing forward a solution so that we can work together to make it a reality," said Commissioner Gimenez.

Working with the Urban Empowerment Corporation, based in Coconut Grove Village West, Commissioner Gimenez brought together numerous public and private organizations, including the South Florida Workforce, to create this one-stop employment center.

Joining in this effort to fight chronic unemployment are the Ministerial Alliance, headed by reverend Kenton Williams; the Helen B. Bentley Health Clinic; Virrick Park; St. Albans Child Enrichment Center; the Pre-Apprentice Program; the Barnyard; Reflections Recovery Center Intensive Outpatient Program; Miami-Dade College; and University of Miami students volunteers.

Among the many services offered are: counseling and treatment for individuals with drug and/or alcohol dependency; assistance with resume writing and interview skills; and access to professional attire. For parents wanting to find work, go to school, or take up a trade, day, pre-school and after-school programs are available.

Also provided are mentoring, spiritual counseling, and personal encouragement.

"By combining our resources and efforts, we have been able to create program that can truly make a difference in the lives of people and the community in which we all live," said Commissioner Gimenez.

Commissioner José "Pepe" Diaz, District 12

Commissioner Diaz appointed County Military Liaison



Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz

Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz is taking on a new and important role as Miami-Dade County's military liaison. Commission Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro appointed Commissioner Diaz to lead the county's efforts in establishing strong ties with the nation's armed forces for the benefit of South Florida as well as the military. Having served proudly as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps, Commissioner Diaz is especially honored to be holding this title and carrying out the initiatives of this new position.

"Because of South Florida's strategic location, it is an important base for the military to conduct operations and maneuvers that further the

goals of the United States and protect our interests overseas," said Commissioner Diaz. "As the County's military liaison, I hope to build positive relationships with all branches of our armed forces – the Army, Navy and Marines – as they continue to use South Florida for their numerous activities. Together, we will do great things."

The United States Southern Command located in Miami will be a particular point of contact for Commissioner Diaz. It is responsible for providing contingency planning, operations, and security cooperation for Central and South America, the Caribbean (except U.S. commonwealths, territories, and possessions), Cuba and the Bahamas, and their territorial waters; as well as for the force protection of U.S. military resources at these locations. USSOUTHCOM is also responsible for ensuring the defense of the Panama Canal and canal area.

Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson, District 3

Commissioner sees 'green' in Miami-Dade



Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson

Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson is championing "green" practices as the way to build affordable homes in Miami-Dade. On October 25, 2007, Commissioner Edmonson toured the site of the first "green" affordable home being built in the county through programs sponsored by the Miami-Dade County Housing Finance Authority. The three-bedroom, two-bathroom Liberty City home was sold to bus driver Tangelia Sands and her four children.

When completed, the house will have 89 points of "green" as determined by the Florida Green Building Coalition. It will be 20 percent (AP186) more energy efficient than a conventional home. The use of sustainable building materials will extend the life of the structure by an additional 35 to 40 years. The use of recycled products, such as concrete foam blocks, will create less waste and make the home more environmentally sensitive.

The new method of construction even guarantees that the home will be climate fortified and hurricane resistant, ensuring the safety of the family inside and protection from structural damage. Furthermore, the home will save water and reduce the consumption of energy.

"Building 'green' is a smart way to tackle our affordable housing needs while protecting our environment," said Commissioner Edmonson. "The new features of sustainable building being implemented in this house will also save the family a lot of money in utility bills – up to



Home builder Ario Lundy (left) shows Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson some of the sustainable building materials being used to construct Miami-Dade's first "green" affordable home, which is located in Liberty City, on Thursday, October 25, 2007. The home will produce less waste and greenhouse gas emissions while saving the residents up to 65 percent in utility bills.

65 percent."

Sand's house has been qualified to participate in the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED pilot program, a "green" rating system for ensuring homes are designed and built to be energy and resource efficient and healthy for occupants.

Despite employing cutting edge procedures and materials, the net cost of owning a sustainable and environmentally friendly home is comparable to owning a conventional home. Some other benefits to building green include reduced greenhouse

gas emissions and exposure to mold, mildew and other indoor toxins which can cause asthma and other health problems.

To ensure the practice of sustainable building of affordable homes continues, the Miami-Dade County Housing Finance Authority hosted a "Green Affordably Symposium" November 12 – 15 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Miami. The symposium highlighted local green initiatives; provided education on affordable, sustainable standards and offered a Green Vendor Expo to showcase sustainable products.

Commissioner Joe A. Martinez, District 11

Commissioner puts financial support behind ambulatory care center at FIU

At the December 4 Board of County Commission meeting Commissioner Joe A. Martinez sponsored and won approval for a resolution that paved the way for \$10 million in support of Florida International University College of Medicine's ambulatory care center. The allocation will come from interest generated by the Building Better Communities General Obligation Bond program.

With the approved resolution, FIU's ambulatory care center will be covered by GOB funds voters approved to build emergency healthcare facilities and other facilities to promote wide accessibility to quality healthcare services for Miami-Dade residents. The center is part of the College of Medicine's Academic Health Sciences Master Plan. It is intended to be an 18,000 square foot building at the school's University Park campus. It will consist of an ambulatory surgery center and an outpatient diagnostic center.

"The primary purpose of the General Obligation Bond program is to build a better community for Miami-Dade residents," said Commissioner Martinez. "Helping FIU build this medical care facility benefits the community tremendously. It helps the university retain funding for its badly needed medical school, and it will create a new place that the general public can go for quality care at minimal cost."

According to FIU President Modesto Madique who spoke at the commissioner meeting, FIU's College of Medicine is on its way to becoming a premier medical school, attracting some of the best health care administrators from across the country to its faculty. Having entered into agreements with Jackson Hospital North, Mount Sinai, the Public Health Trust and Miami Children's Hospital, President Madique expects that the ambulatory care center will make a significant contribution to Miami-Dade's healthcare landscape.



Florida International University President Modesto Madique, Commissioner Joe A. Martinez and Dean of FIU's College of Medicine Dr. John Rock stand in front of the signage at the university's fledgling College of Medicine.

Commissioner José "Pepe" Diaz, District 12

MIA opens military lounge

To bolster its strong support of the U.S. military, Miami International Airport in conjunction with Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, who serves as the Miami-Dade County's military liaison and is the Airport and Tourism Committee Chairman, held a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the opening of a military lounge at Miami International Airport on November 20, 2007.

Miami-Dade Aviation officials, Miami-Dade Police Airport Station officers, Customs and Border Protection members and members of U.S. armed forces also attended the ceremony at Concourse E to celebrate the new space that will accommodate traveling military men and women. The new military lounge features sleeping accommodations; computers with internet access; televisions with VCR and DVD players; refrigerators; books, magazines, videos and games for children and adults; phone, fax and photocopy service; snacks and beverages; upholstered seating; and tables. The facility is open 24 hours a day to members of the armed services and their dependents with official military identification.

"We know how hard the soldiers work and we respect them for the many sacrifices they make to protect our country and freedoms. This lounge will be a special place just for them, a way for the county to show its appreciation for all that they do," said Commissioner Diaz.



Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz (third from right) in MIA's new military lounge with TSA Officer Carlos Demera, Lt. Gen. Glen F. Spears, TSA Officer Patricia Troncoso, Armed Forces Service Center Director Keith Whitbeck, TSA Officer Hope Styles, TSA Officer Jose Matos, TSA Officer Augusto Delavalle, and Staff Sgt. Loughan.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

The lounge is operated by volunteers from Armed Forces Service Center (AFSC), Inc., a non-profit organization, and is supported by private contributions and in-kind donations. The Miami-Dade Aviation Department provides AFSC with space for the lounge at no charge.

Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro, District 5

MIA inaugurates South Terminal



Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro, accompanied by Miami-Dade Mayor and Commissioners presented a proclamation to Miami-Dade Aviation Director Jose Abreu declaring November 30, 2007 "South Terminal Day." Also present at the event were U.S. Congressman Lincoln Diaz Balart, Congressman Mario Diaz Balart and Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

Community Leaders and members of the airline industry gathered at Miami International Airport's new South Terminal in November for its grand opening. The airport's 1.7-million square-foot South Terminal expansion offers a new five-level facility with 28 gates, 19 of which are capable of handling domestic and international flights.

Delta flight 1061 on August 29 was South Terminal's first flight, and since then, airlines have gradually relocated to the facility and begun flight operations.

Also included in this billion-dollar project is a Federal Inspection Service processing area capable of handling 2,000 international passengers per hour, along with a new baggage screening system that can accommodate 4,000 pieces of luggage an hour. Passengers can now check in at 168 new ticket counters and have an enormous 1,048 feet of new curbside pick-up and drop-off space. A new cruise and tour bus station, with 22 airline check-in counters for shuttling fliers to the Port of Miami and 900 feet of new moving walkway on the third level of the complex will also make traveling at MIA more convenient.

"South Terminal is a beautiful combination of aesthetic architectural design and efficient passenger service," said José Abreu, Miami-Dade Aviation Department Director. "In a visual way, it will help us say to our passengers, 'Welcome to Miami-Dade County.'"

Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, District 9

Apron collection displayed at the Bethel House

Helen Gage is a special constituent to Commissioner Dennis Moss.

Last year, after saving a Bahamian immigrant's 1937 16'-by-25' shotgun house from demolition, she opened the Bethel House African-Bahamian Museum in Perrine. With the help of Commissioner Moss, she was able to have the tiny, dilapidated house restored after it was moved a few blocks south to its current site at 18201 SW 102nd Court, Perrine.

The Bethel House African-Bahamian Museum represents to Gage the forgotten lives of humble workers. Some of her collection of aprons wave in the breeze in back of the museum as a display. Helen Gage sees aprons as cloth that speaks. "Aprons have such a history, a story to tell," says Gage. "They are like art."

Thirty years ago, she started what has become a treasure hunt to find the best and the brightest aprons. Today, she has collected more than 500 aprons, spanning 75 years and five wars. They range from doll-size ones to a crocheted yellow-and-white striped creation to a pink porker-shaped apron.

In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, women stitched aprons out of feed sacks. During World War II's rationing in the '40s, women used a synthetic cloth, rayon. For decades, women fashioned art around their waist by quilting, embroidering and hand-sewing aprons. They added lace, buttons, cross-stitching, tatting, rickrack and ribbons.

In the '60s the aprons were pilloried as symbols of women stuck in the house. Women threw aprons away, even those their mothers and grandmothers had stitched. In South Florida, though, Gage was salvaging what others no longer wanted. Even in the late '70s, she was



Helen Gage and Miami-Dade Commissioner Dennis C. Moss stand next to neighborhood children wearing Gage's apron collection. Aprons from different time periods are on display at the Bethel House African-Bahamian Museum in Perrine.

drawn to the humble apron, no matter the put-downs. While searching for old ones in secondhand shops and antique stores, she imagined the history. "It's just been a lot of fun," she says. "I can feel the stories coming from the aprons I buy."

Gage dreams of holding an exhibit of her aprons but needs a larger place than the 400-square-foot Bethel House. Gage mourns that aprons are not as common as they once were. People need to realize how good they are for the soul, she says. "They talk to you in their own way," Gage says. "They're very friendly. I'm so happy that I collect them." Some of the aprons can be seen for free as part of a tour of the African-Bahamian Museum. Call 305-251-2458 to request a guided tour.

Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro, District 5

Chairman tours Miami River

Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro toured the Miami River on November 30, 2007, to see the progress of the Miami River dredging project.



Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro listens attentively as Miami River Commission managing director Brett Bibeau explains the dredging progress.

Working closely with Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, the State of Florida, South Florida Water Management District, Florida Inland Navigational District, and the City of Miami, the Chairman secured an estimated \$33 million to continue the Miami River maintenance dredging and environmental clean up along the Miami

River's federal navigable channel.

To bolster the river's image as a jewel of Miami and a tourist destination, the river is coming to life with new residences, shipping terminals, a mega yacht center, new landscapes, riverwalk sections, restaurants and parks. Merrill-Stevens was recently given the green light to continue their \$55 million expansion and renovation of its Miami River shipyard transforming it into a state-of-the-art facility able to drydock and service 250-ft mega-yachts, generating over 500 full time jobs which pay above the County average and creating a marine vocational school to teach the necessary skills to obtain the new employment opportunities.

"The Miami River project is emerging as one of North America's most vibrant downtown riverscapes," said Chairman Barreiro. "We need to continue our efforts working with the various agencies, the public and private sector to enhance the Miami River while balancing the interests of its marine industries, historic neighborhoods, flourishing businesses and mixed-use redevelopment opportunities".

Commissioner Katy Sorenson, District 8

Green Building requirements added to Building Better Communities Program

Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved an ordinance proposed by Commissioner Katy Sorenson in October, that extends the County's green building ordinance to construction projects done by municipalities on behalf of the County.

"Sustainable building is great environmental and fiscal policy," explained Commissioner Sorenson. "A number of studies have shown that green building requires relatively little up-front investment while providing a significant financial return through reduced operating costs."

The ordinance states that cities within Miami-Dade that wish to partner with the County to expedite the construction of projects on



Commissioner Katy Sorenson

the County's behalf, meet the County's sustainable building program requirements. Cities that adopt their own sustainable development policies will be able to use those policies in lieu of the County green building requirements if they choose. "With water shortages and concerns about the impact of global warming looming, we need to do whatever we can to be energy and water efficient," said Sorenson. "This ordinance will provide an opportunity for some of our cities to help in that effort."

This ordinance is the latest in a series of moves intended to accelerate the adoption of "green building" practices countywide. Commissioner Sorenson has successfully sponsored legislation that: led to the sustainable development "green building" plan and the creation of the Office of Sustainability, provided job creation tax credits for green buildings used in commercial and industrial operations and created a fast-track for building permits for qualifying sustainable building projects.

Vice Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan, District 1

Residents participate in Landmark property planning



Vice Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan

Vice Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan met with a packed room of District 1 residents recently to present preliminary plans for the 180 acres that make up the Landmark complex. The property, which lies at the corner of N.W. 199th Street and N.W. 47th Avenue, is the largest plot of land owned by the County and is scheduled for development in the future. The meeting afforded residents an opportunity to give additional input on what the multi-purpose compound should include when completed.

In addition to discussion on the possibilities of a retail center, library, elementary school and various kinds of residences, representatives from the County's Planning and Zoning Department and General Services Administration presented a virtual tour and mock-ups of some of the suggestions made at a meeting last September. The preliminary plans for the compound include recreational facilities, a retail complex and various residential units.

"One of the things I'm passionate about is workforce and affordable housing and these plans include townhouses, one and two-story single family houses as well as apartment units for seniors," said Commissioner Jordan. "The Landmark plan is well-laid out, includes lots of green space, three ponds and addresses the need for more affordable housing."

The draft designs show a walkable community with tree-lined streets, a park with athletic fields, a large community center and residential units around a picturesque town center. Plans also include retaining some of the current facilities currently housed on the property, such as the fire station and His House – a transitional housing agency for kids aging out of the foster care system. There is also allowance for a small police station.

The more than 150 residents at the meeting had many questions and suggestions that included medical facilities, traffic alleviation methods, and concerns about the use of a nearby landfill.

"I'm pleased to see that many of the community's suggestions were included in the preliminary plan," said Commissioner Jordan. "I realize that we may not be able to satisfy everyone with everything but I want to ensure that the things that will serve this community best are the things that will be included in the final plan."



Commissioner Jordan talks to residents about plans for the Landmark property. (Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle, District 2

“Watch out Oprah Winfrey... Here I come!”



Employee Recognition manager Maria M. Casellas looks on as Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle shows a photo of Mrs. Queen Booker (blue dress), depicting the way she looked 35 years ago when she joined Miami-Dade County. On October 4, 2007, Mrs. Booker was recognized with a Service Award Plaque for her 35 years of service to Miami-Dade County.

Don't miss Miami-Dade Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle on your County channel every other Thursday at 8:00 a.m. during The Office of the Chair Service Awards Recognition Program. Don't expect to see a serious politician. Instead, you will see someone who shines under the cameras – a professional television host and a comedian.

Since 2004, Commissioner Rolle and Employee Recognition manager Maria M. Casellas have hosted this entertaining presentation of

awards. The Commissioner jokes about how employees may have looked 30, 35 or in some cases 40 years ago when they started working for the County. One employee, who celebrated 35 years of County employment recently, joked that she looked like a Coca-Cola bottle when she started, but now she's a 2-liter. Others claim to have had more hair, or to have been taller and leaner. All, however, treasured their time with the County, as well as the experiences they will take with them into retirement.

The Employee Recognition Program is available to more than 30,000 employees for a variety of achievements, including: years of service, an occasion of exceptional performance or a long history of outstanding performance. The program enhances employee morale and celebrates their loyalty, commitment and involvement.

“We need to make employees feel appreciated and let them know how much we value their commitment to serve the residents of Miami-Dade County,” said Commissioner Rolle. “Every employee has a need for praise and recognition. I take pleasure in recognizing them for their dedication in fulfilling their responsibilities and carrying out the mission of Miami-Dade County.”

To learn more about The Office of the Chair Employee Recognition Program, please log on to: http://www.miamidade.gov/officeofthechair/employee_recognition.asp



Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle recognizes Miami-Dade employees from various departments on June 28, 2007.

(Miami-Dade/Ryan Holloway)

Find out who your Commissioner is by visiting www.miamidade.gov/commiss and clicking on "Who is my Commissioner?"

You have questions? We have answers!



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